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Synopsises of Important Articles.

The Gospel Miracles and Historical Science.*—The assertion is made by "liberal" thinkers that historical science rejects the gospel miracles. This is a serious charge, for the conclusions of the historical science of our century have been carefully wrought out and tested and are worthy of attentive consideration. Christianity, rooted in unique facts, must subject herself to the methods of historical science to maintain by good and sufficient proofs that these *are* facts. It is shown that the most trustworthy conclusions of those historical scholars of Germany who have given themselves to the study of the gospel criticism are that the miracles, as recorded, did take place. Holtzmann, a most "liberal" critic, says: "Unless daily miracles of healing are admitted there is absolutely no gospel history." The synoptic gospels the critics regard as essentially made up of the recollection of Christ's companions. The miracles recorded in them are accepted by such men as Holtzmann and Weiss. Not that historical science can prove them to be supernatural; such a conclusion cannot be reached in this sphere of investigation; it can only show that they are facts. But this it does show upon the basis of the latest and most approved methods of investigation, going to the sources which lie nearest to the time of Jesus and the origin of Christianity, weighing and testing them, finding in them an essentially true record of the life of the Christ, "whose character shines with majestic beauty through the incidents they narrate."

A plain but thoroughly satisfactory statement of the results of New Testament investigation. It meets fairly the rash assertions of some recent writers who have represented these results as wholly unfavorable to the Gospels.

Two Parables.†—The parables of The Prodigal Son and The Labourers in the Vineyard have little resemblance in external form, yet the teaching of the two is closely similar. Each has a main lesson, each a secondary lesson. 1) The main teaching of the Prodigal is that God is willing to welcome repentant prodigals and that men ought to welcome them. The kindred teaching of the Labourers is that those who enter God's service late in life shall receive an equal reward with those who have served God all their lives, i. e., that mere length of service does not count in the distribution of heavenly rewards. 2) The secondary lesson of the Prodigal parable is a warning, not that those who habitually keep Christ's commandments are in danger of losing their eternal reward for a fit of sullenness or anger, but against the special dangers of a life spent from its beginning in the habitual service of God. In the Labourers' parable the same secondary teaching is found, viz., that those who have served God all their lives, or in any eminent way, are in danger of trusting in their own services rather than in the grace of God, and of regarding with jealousy those who are placed on an equality with them after a shorter period of service or after services which from a human point of view appear but small. The antidote for such errors is a truer appreciation of the divine privileges and blessings which come to God's children on condition of faith. If grace is recognized, jealousy is thereby excluded. Otherwise they are least in the kingdom of Heaven. The ordinary view of the elder brother and the all-day laborers is too hard on them. The faults of temper displayed by them and by

* By Professor E. Y. Hincks in *The Andover Review*, June, 1889, pp. 561-569.

† By John Joseph Murphy in *The Expositor*, April, 1889, pp. 290-303.